



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Grain Inspection,
Packers and Stockyards
Administration

Stop 3601
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-3601

GIPSA SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

MAY 13 2008

As your Administrator, I am committed to creating a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. All employees have the right to work in an environment that is free of unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures. Therefore, all employees, especially managers and supervisors, are responsible for establishing and maintaining a workplace free from discrimination, including sexual harassment.

GIPSA defines sexual harassment as: (a) participating in coercive or repeated unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments, gestures, or physical comments of a sexual nature; (b) using implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior in the process of conducting agency business; (c) using implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, or job of an employee; or (d) displaying of material in the office or via e-mail or the internet that contains offensive images or textual references that are of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the use of sexual references that are overheard and found to be offensive by an employee or customer, the displaying of a poster that is found to be offensive by an employee or customer, or the physical cornering or trapping of an employee or customer. Although reports of sexual harassment are often filed by a woman against a man, reports may also be filed by a man against a man, a woman against a man, or a woman against a woman.

Sexual harassment is illegal according to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In GIPSA it will neither be condoned nor tolerated. All GIPSA employees are responsible for managing their behavior and for immediately reporting any allegations of sexual harassment. Substantiated sexual harassment complaints will receive swift, consistent and fair resolution; discipline may include letter of reprimand, suspension, or removal. Reports may be made to any of the following: (a) the harasser's supervisor; b) GIPSA's Civil Rights Staff (202-720-0216); (c) the USDA Inspector General (OIG) Hotline (calls may be made anonymously: 1-800-424-9121 or 202-690-1202 TTY); or (d) the Federal Women's Program (FWP) manager.

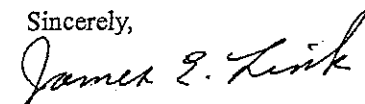
The reason that sexual harassment is of particular concern in GIPSA is that its consequences are harmful to individuals and to the workplace environment. For the individual, emotional or physical pain may result; costs to managers and to the agency may include a poor public image, absenteeism, and a high employee turnover rate. Supervisors are particularly charged with establishing and maintaining a safe and productive workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Managers and supervisors who tolerate sexual harassment or fail to take appropriate action on reports of such incidents may be disciplined.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment. Managers must clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Employees may attend training on sexual harassment prevention. Training materials are available from the Civil Rights Office.

I am confident that you will continue to work with me to make GIPSA a workplace free of discrimination and harassment.

Please post this notice in prominent locations at all GIPSA worksites.

Sincerely,


James E. Link
Administrator

Treat Every Customer and Employee Fairly, Equitably, and with Dignity and Respect
Visit us on the Internet at www.usda.gov/gipsa